



**PRESS RELEASE  
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## **City of Belton to Receive \$2,990,610 in Category 7 Transportation Funds**

The Policy Board for the Killeen-Temple Metropolitan Planning Organization on Wednesday agreed to the City of Belton's full request of \$2,990,610 in Category 7 transportation funds for the West 9th Avenue Project. With Wednesday's allocation, Belton now has funding commitments to pay for the entire \$5,996,410 project to extend 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Loop 121 to University Drive, connecting two major thoroughfares—Loop 121 and Main Street (SH 317).

"It is another great day for the City of Belton," Mayor Jim Covington said. "This proves that perseverance pays off. We've been chasing funding for at least six years now, picking up a bit here and a bit there. This is the final and largest piece of the puzzle."

Extending 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue represents the only feasible way to address traffic congestion on Main Street, given the presence of historic homes and the railroad overpass near 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The need for the project was first documented in a City Thoroughfare Plan that was developed more than 30 years ago. In addition to enhanced traffic circulation for all motorists wishing to travel between Loop 121 and Main Street, the extension will also improve emergency response times by approximately two minutes.

Belton City Manager Sam Listi added, "With TxDOT's Transportation Enhancement grant award of \$1.2 million for sidewalks and bike trail along 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue in July, KTMPO offered Belton our most realistic funding option to finish the project. We appreciate the support of the Policy Board members and their recognition of the importance of this project to the region."

Belton's project was ranked first among the four considered for Category 7 funds, which are federal transportation funds made available to eligible regions based upon population. Hill Country Transit District was also awarded funding for capital equipment (bus) purchase.

"We are pleased three projects were fully funded, and the fourth was partially funded, extending the impact of the funds across the region," KTMPO Chairman Scott Cosper said.

Final allocations approved today included:

<i>Entity</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Belton	W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Ave. Extension	\$2,990,610	1
Killeen	Trimmier Rd. Widening	\$2,000,000	2
Copperas Cove	Courtney Ln. Improvements	\$218,506	3
Harker Heights	FM 2410 Widening	\$574,663*	4
Hill Country Transit District	Two Replacement Buses	\$642,642	N/A

\*Partial Funding